

REMARKS

Claims 55, 58-70, 72, 73 and 89-92 are pending. Claim 55 is allowed. By this response, claims 58-70 are amended and claims 54, 56, 57, 71 and 74-88 cancelled. Allowance of the application is respectfully requested based on the above amendments and following remarks.

Claim 55 has been allowed. Applicants have amended claims 58-70 to solely depend from claim 55 and cancel the remaining claims. Thus, the only pending independent claim is claim 55 which has been indicated as allowed.

With the amendment of claims 58-70 and the cancellation of claims 54, 56, 57, 71 and 74-88, the rejection of claims 54, 58-60 and 62-63 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sweeny, et al.; claims 71 and 86-88 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gennser, et al.; claims 74-78 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Broekaert (US 6,218,677); claims 64-66, 69 and 89-92 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sweeny, et al. in view of Larsen, et al and claims 79-82 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable Broekaert in view Larsen, et al. are now moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. Prompt allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad J. Billings (Reg. No. 48,917) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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